

Jenison Historical Association

JENISON HISTORY

January 2012

Issue No.: 2012-1

www.jenisonhistory.org

JENISON HISTORICAL
ASSOCIATION
PO Box 664
Jenison, Michigan 49429
TELEPHONE
(616) 457-4398

Our mission is to learn about Jenison history, obtain artifacts relating to its history, and maintain the Jenison Historical Museum as a place to share and display our heritage.

The Grand River

Our first Open Houses of 2012, we have planned to explore the Grand River.

Join us in this series as we explore the History of this 'Grand' river, the Crossings where we met our neighbors on the other side and the Riverboats.

SATURDAY, March 10, 2012

SATURDAY, April 14, 2012

SATURDAY, May 12, 2012

2-4 PM

Donations are appreciated to help maintain the Tiffany House Museum, Jenison



1948 Flood at 12 Port Sheldon



From the Archives

If you have a topic you would like to contribute (your family stories, etc.) please contact the editor, we would love to include your story.

THE LOWING CEMETERY

as told by Ken Williams

There were many interesting people who came to Georgetown Township in the 1830's. It was during a period of land and timber speculation. This is a story that involves two brothers who were early settlers of Georgetown Township in Ottawa county. Not the Jenison twins, Lucius and Luman for whom the area was named, but two Lowing brothers who came to the Township in 1836. The Lowing brothers, Stephen and Holden, came to start a new life for their family by harvesting the tall white pine trees that grew in the area.

Stephen Lowing, born in 1817, grew up in the state of New York where he lived with his Uncle James Lowing because his family was having a hard time providing for all of his siblings. At age 17, Stephen returned to his family only to find them in need. At the age of 19, having heard of the opportunities that could be found in the forests of Michigan, he walked to Michigan ending up in Grand Haven where he found work at the sawmill of William Hathaway. Stephen paddled a canoe up the Grand River to

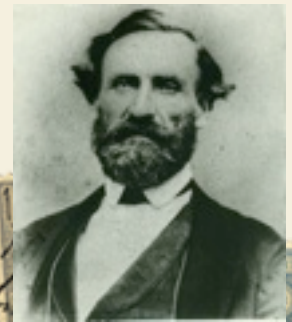
Georgetown Township looking for land. he found 80 acres of land opposite Sand Creek which he was able to buy. A visitor once remarked that the trees were so tall he had to look twice to see their tops.

In 1837 he built a cabin on the land and in 1838 he returned home to New York to study for the ministry and became a Baptist Minister. He also married his wife, Ruth, and they had their first baby Martha. In 1841 he returned to his land in Georgetown bringing his new family and his brother Holden. Together the two brothers began cutting the trees hoping to sell the logs in Grand Haven. But logs weren't bringing in enough money to turn a profit so Stephen decided to cut logs into boards to sell to new settlers. He dammed up a small stream, set up a crude water wheel and built a sawmill. By 1850 Stephen had built his third mill on the site and had thirty or forty men working for him so he built a lumber camp which had a boarding house, store, a jail, several cabins, and a large building which had so many projections that the lumbermen called it the Beehive. Stephen's store housed the first post-office for Georgetown and he was the first Postmaster. He also served as

Supervisor, Clerk, Justice of the Peace and became a pettifogger for Georgetown Township.

Stephen also distinguished himself during the Civil War. In 1861 he recruited and organized a group of area men who would become Company H of the Third Regiment Michigan Army of the Potomac. The group marched from their training grounds in a field on Stephen's property 16 miles to the Hall Street fairgrounds in Grand Rapids. He

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Stephen Lowing

1862. During his recuperation he served as a Judge at the Detroit barracks. He continued in the army until 1864 when he resigned his military commission because of his wounds. Stephen returned home but the number of soldiers seeking assistance with their war claims persuaded him to study law and was admitted to the Bar in 1866. He became Prosecuting Attorney

continued on page 3

THE LOWING CEMETERY (CONT)

continued from page 2

of Ottawa County in 1868 until 1884.

Meanwhile, Holden Lowing, Stephen's brother also prospered in Georgetown Township. In 1841, at the age of 20, he came with Stephen to Michigan. They came by lake steamers around the Great Lakes. He stayed with Stephen for a short time and then purchased 80 acres just south of Steven's land near what is now 24th Avenue and Bauer Road. Holden worked in a lumber camp through the winter and also got a summer job as assistant surveyor.

In 1842, Holden and Stephen's father, Isaac, arrived in Michigan and Holden helped him clear land to build a cabin large enough for the whole family to stay in. the family arrived the next year. Holden bought more land west of his father's place and continued to add more land as the years went by. In 1842, then only 21 years old, Holden served as Township Clerk, he also served the community as a School Board member, was the first Grange Master and a charter member of the Masonic Lodge. His home also served as the post office when the Democrats were in power. Franklin Bosworth's home took the

duty when the Republicans were in.

In 1851, Holden and Eleanor Woodruff were married and they had 13 children together. He built a large two story home which still stands today just west of his Father's property. The home became a gathering place for are young people where singing was said to be the main past time.

And now the mystery. At one time, prior to 1861, Holden got an idea to extend 28th Avenue thru his land and also Stephen's land from Bauer Road to Fillmore Road. and Ohio Docks on the Grand River. It would make a fairly straight road all the way from Hudsonville, north to the River making it easier to haul logs to Ohio Mill Docks. For some unexplained reason, Stephen refused to allow the road through his land and the idea was dropped.

Years later, in 1861, Stephen changed his mind and decided that he would now like the road to go through, so he started the proper legal procedures to get a road built through Holden's land. Holden was Township Supervisor at this time and remembering the snub from the first idea decided he would not let the road go through. Knowing that a road could not disturb a cemetery, he established a small cemetery on his southern property line. the cemetery was directly in line with the proposed

road, blocking the right of way. Clarence Ulberg, Grandson of Holden and caretaker of the cemetery for many years, said his mother told him that an old recluse came along and anybody could stay overnight and have two meals at the Lowing home. This man died during the night and was the first one buried in the cemetery. Holden and Stephen's father Isaac and mother Lavina were later buried there along with several others.

The cemetery still blocks 28th Avenue and travelers heading north on 28th must either use 24th or 36th

Avenue to reach Fillmore Road. A large stone with a plaque was placed there by the lowing Reunion Association in 1970 and the Cemetery is still cared for by the Lowing family. I have never read or heard a plausible reason why Stephen refused to allow the road in the first place.



Museum Happenings

March

History of the Grand.

Watch the calendar on the web for other upcoming events.:

We look forward to seeing you, and if you would like to volunteer to help at any of these events, please contact the museum at 457-4398 or email us at info@jenisonhistory.org.

Thank You:

THANK YOU!! To all the members and family and friends who worked to make the museum 'shine' for the Holiday season! Your efforts paid off with one of the largest open house events we

have ever seen.

Also, JHA would like to extend a big thank you to the Four Seasons Garden Club for the beautiful gardens at the Museum. We look forward to another beautiful year of flowers.

The garden club meets the 3rd Thursday of each month, except January at the Grandville Senior Center at 7 PM.

Are you a member??

If you are not a dues paying member, please consider joining to help support the Association. Dues are a bargain at only \$10 per year. Contact the JHA at info@jenisonhistory.org. or

calling the museum

616-457-4398

JHA Board Opportunities:

There are current openings on the JHA Board. Would you consider volunteering a few hours a month to maintenance of the museum and learning about and preserving our Jenison heritage? Please contact a board member or send an email to info@jenisonhistory.org.



Volunteer Opportunities!!

Museum Cleaning: This is a big job, as you can well imagine, that needs constant attention in order to have the museum look it's best during the open houses. Contact any board member if you can lend a few hours.

Tour Guides: The school tours are a great way of teaching the children about our history and is such a rewarding experience. You won't regret being a part of this experience for our local

children. Joyce Klawiter would love to hear from you.

Community Displays: An initiative is to get some displays out into the community, possible to local banks, schools and businesses. What better way to get awareness out into the community than to bring the museum to them. Grayce Lancaster is heading up this project. She would welcome any help you might be able to offer from finding the locations to

picking display material and setting up the displays.

And the list goes on... Monthly Open Houses, Theme's for Open Houses, Inventory, Museum Maintenance, board trustee.

You can come to a monthly meeting or reach out to any board member if you would like to volunteer in any particular area.

MARCH OPEN HOUSE

History of the Grand River

Join us for this 1st in a series,
exploring the Grand River!

SATURDAY, March 10, 2012
2-4 PM

FOR SALE AT THE MUSEUM

Jenison Museum Note Pads	\$ 1.50
Stationary with Envelopes	\$ 2.00
Book: Bend in the River	\$15.00
Book: At the Bend	\$ 3.00
Mill Print (unframed)	\$10.00
Jenison at the Bend CD	\$10.00
Historical Prints:	
Large	\$10.00
Small	\$ 7.50

Available during any open house, or call the Museum at
457-4398

JHA TRUSTEE'S

Chair

Liz Timmer (13)

Vice Chair/Curator

Ken Williams (14)

Treasurer/Editor

Ruth Lowing (14)

Social Secretary

Nellie DeLaat (13)

Recording Secretary

Bev Potter (13)

Tours/Co-Archivist

Joyce Klawiter (12)

Co-Archivist

Barb Semeyn (14)

Maintenance/Historian

Mike Timmer (13)

Trustee

Yvonne Williams (14)

Township Rep

Del South

((#)) = year of re-election to the board

Contact Information: To reach any board member, leave a message at 457-4398 or info@jenisonhistory.org

Historical Association of Michigan

Find us on the registry of the Historical
Society of Michigan
www.hsmichigan.org

**We are now on Facebook, find us
at Jenison History Association
and become a friend.**



Jenison Historical Association
PO Box 664
Jenison, MI 49429

2012 Meeting Schedule

Thursday, January 19 - Georgetown Library

Thursday, February 16 - Georgetown Library

Thursday, March 15 - Georgetown Library

Thursday, April 19 - Georgetown Library

Thursday, May 17 - **TBD**

Thursday, June 21 - Georgetown Library

Thursday, July 19 - Georgetown Library

Thursday, August 16 - **TBD**

Thursday, September 20 - **TBD**

Thursday, October 18 - Georgetown Library

Thursday, November 15 - Georgetown Library

No Meeting in December, 2011

All meetings begin at 6:45 PM unless noted

2012 Museum Open House Schedule

March 10 2-4 PM History of the Grand

April 14 2-4 PM Crossing the Grand

May 12 2-4 PM History of the Riverboat

June 16 2-4 PM

July 14 2-4 PM Riverboat Ride (Tentative)

September 8 2-4 PM Jenison Public Schools
memorabilia/yearbook
party

October 13 2-4 PM

December 8 1-4 PM Holiday Open House

January 12 2013 2-4 PM 2nd Holiday Open House

1st Tuesday of the month April thru November
10 AM - Noon